

## Case Study



### SmartCare Overview

SmartCare is committed to enabling independent living and a good quality of life in the comfort of your own home. A range of trained and vetted carers lend a hand to any family who need extra support and care in the Surrey and Hampshire areas. The business is careful to make flexibility a priority in what they offer; they do not sell off-the-shelf care 'packages', they design a care plan from scratch to fit around their clients' needs, and their budget. The business was founded in 2007 by Alex Van Oortsmerssen after his own father's experience with Alzheimer's disease highlighted the need for home care for the vulnerable, and it is a business motivated by a genuine desire to help rather than a profit margin.

They put a tremendous emphasis on their recruitment, choosing staff who are experienced, cheerful, reliable, and above all, as dedicated to clients as SmartCare itself. All staff are DBS checked and go through psychometric testing to make sure that care work is right for them, and all staff are being trained, or have qualified to NVQ2/QCF2 and above. They are encouraged to attend courses specialising in Alzheimer's, Dementia, Stroke and Learning Disabilities, Diabetes and End of Life to help them understand what is needed to meet people's needs.

### The Situation

In 2011, SmartCare were unhappy with their telephone system. The lines were going down with increasing regularity, and there was no capability to switch calls between their four offices in Weybridge, Farnborough, Egham and Epsom. This was a particular problem for a care business where so many of the staff are constantly on the move and outside of the office all day. It was critical for the smooth running of the organisation for the staff to be able to quickly get in touch with the office. Unreliable phone lines were, of course, inconvenient for clients as well. There was potential to lose new business, and if anyone needed to change visiting times etc. there was no quick and reliable way to get in touch with SmartCare.

SmartCare's phone system was analogue, which meant if ever the business moved offices, they would have to completely rewire, which would be expensive and inconvenient.



### About iCS Communications

iCS is an independent supplier of business telecoms, data and energy to UK businesses. With more than two decades' experience, we provide you with value for money by offering the essential services you need to operate efficiently.

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### The Solution

iCS Communications decided to install an entirely new phone system. They recommended the HIPT phone system. This was particularly useful for a business with a lot of people on the move, as calls to the office number could be picked up anywhere by anyone who had linked their phone to that number. There was no longer a need for someone to 'man the phones'; someone would always be contactable during working hours. It also meant that calls could be quickly and easily transferred between offices. SmartCare also appreciated the flexibility of the handsets. They could be unplugged and taken anywhere in the world, and still work. This stood the business in good stead for opening new offices, saving time and money where they would previously have to set up the infrastructure for a phone system.

### The Result

SmartCare were very happy with the Cisco phone system. It was not only more reliable than the previous system, it also saved them money in set up and installation fees, and their monthly bills worked out cheaper as well.

Alex Van Oortmerssen, Managing Director of SmartCare, was extremely impressed with the service that iCS Communications provided 'They were immensely helpful throughout, and went to real effort to work out what kind of phone system my business needed. A personal and professional service.'

SmartCare were so impressed with the service that iCS Communications provided that they recently approached them again, this time to use their business mobile service. Again, iCS Communications worked with Alex and his team to understand the daily life of staff in the business and identify what they needed from their mobile phones. Because staff are so active, SmartCare needed work mobiles that were highly resilient to damage, and iCS Communications recommended CAT phones as a manufacturer that specialises in phones for people with busy, active lifestyles. SmartCare have been very happy with these mobile phones.

Alex Van Oortmerssen said, 'I wouldn't look anywhere else – Not only do iCS Communications provide great customer service, I know I can trust them to be up to date on the latest tech.'

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They were efficient and reliable throughout – A winning combination. I couldn't be happier with the service from iCS.

**Alex Van Oortmerssen**  
Managing Director  
at SmartCare